

UNDERSTANDING REBIRTH AND THE SYMBOLS WHICH EXPRESS IT
A STUDY OF CARL JUNG AND PAUL TILLICH

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Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him."

Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nicodemus said to him "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born anew. The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit.'"

Nicodemus said to him, "How can this be?"

Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand this? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen; but you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?"

The Gospel of John 3:1-12

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ABSTRACT

UNDERSTANDING REBIRTH AND THE SYMBOLS WHICH EXPRESS IT A STUDY OF CARL JUNG AND PAUL TILLICH

This dissertation has made a study of the phenomenon of rebirth. The dissertation had two areas of exploration in regard to rebirth.

The first area was to define and understand what is meant by rebirth for Christians in light of Jesus' statements on rebirth as found in John 3:1-12. This area explored rebirth in terms of the individual: when does rebirth begin, how, and where, and what could be expected of that individual when rebirth takes place. To approach this area of exploration two fields of study with one representative from each field were sought. The two fields of study and the representatives were psychology of religion with Carl Jung and theology with Paul Tillich. These fields were looked to for the psychological understanding of what takes place and the theological understanding of why it's necessary and how it happens.

The second area of exploration has to do with the symbols which express rebirth. The symbols of rebirth were explored, discussed and explained. Symbols of rebirth allow people to enter the experience of rebirth. The symbols of rebirth are feminine symbols for the most part. These are lifted up as important for the way in which they express God and at the same time for the way in which they affirm the feminine side of human nature. Again the methodology here

was to explore the writings of the same two fields of study represented by the same two men.

The conclusions which were gained answered the questions of the exploration of each area. In the first area it has been found that rebirth could be labeled a process of continual transformation of the individual. The aim of the transformation is God, the wholeness of the person, and the quality of relating to others. This is the overall definition of rebirth and it is the answer to the question of what can be expected of the individual as well. The questions of rebirth's beginnings are answered briefly by the following explanation. There is a tension between the divine and the human that causes within the human the concern for the meaning and fulfillment of life. This answers the when, where, and how of rebirth.

The second area of exploration on the symbols which express rebirth also came to certain conclusions. The symbols of rebirth were found to be feminine in totality or partially feminine. Rebirth speaks to a process of the individual's relationship with God. The way in which the process has been symbolized and expressed is through the feminine side of human nature. By using the feminine two things have occurred. One, God is spoken of in feminine terms and as embracing the feminine. Two, the feminine is thus lifted up and affirmed as not only one way to symbolically express God, but also as a way to symbolically express a process which happens for all of humanity. Thus the dissertation makes the point that feminine

symbols can be used to express experiences shared by women as well as men. The concern here is that in theological writings and church history women and the feminine side of human nature have been relegated to a subordinate position. Historically the experiences of women were said to have been able to be adequately expressed in masculine terms, but not vice versa. By finding places where we can affirm that feminine symbols express God and all of humanity's strivings, our understanding of God and human nature will be transformed to its rightful place.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation, Understanding Rebirth and the Symbols which Express It, a Study of Carl Jung and Paul Tillich, seeks to come to an understanding of rebirth from both psychology of religion through Carl Jung, and from theology through Paul Tillich. In looking to Jung and Tillich and their respective disciplines for an understanding of rebirth, I have had two areas of questioning in mind.

The first area is somewhat traditional. Just what do we mean by "rebirth"? In this area certain questions are asked, i.e., "How does one know one has been reborn?", "Is rebirth a personal decision, or is it initiated by God?", "Is there a change, and if so, can that change be seen?" This first area of questioning is an area which I feel needs to be sought after by each generation of Christians. It is an area of vital concern to persons seeking intentional Christian lifestyles. It is also a crucial area for those who practice adult baptism. Having an understanding of this concept of rebirth, centered in the act of baptism, is helpful. It is not only helpful for the minister, but also for the one who is baptised.

The second area of questioning which is important here is in the area of symbolic expression. Certain questions are applicable here such as "As a symbol what does rebirth tell us, or express to us?", "What does the symbol rebirth say

about our understanding of God?"

This second area of questioning can perhaps be seen as one which reflects the spirit of the time. At this point in time many persons are reevaluating theology in terms of the feminist perspective. Do our theological statements reflect the wholeness of God and God's revelation to all human beings? For many of us it does not. It is my feeling that our Christian faith holds out to us a wholistic understanding of life, but that the tradition we have inherited does not always affirm this wholeness. Even though we are reaffirming that God did create us male and female in God's own image, there are still problems. We are still hearing a Christian faith proclaimed that is a one-sided male imaged and symbolized faith. However, rebirth imagery is feminine imagery basically. The passage from John 3:1-12 quoted on the preface uses symbols of birthing and putting forth new life to express the spiritual dimensions of reality. By using the symbol of birthing, Jesus pointed to a God who embraces this part of creation. God embraces this part of creation not as a male God but as a whole God, the supreme being who is beyond "maleness and femaleness." In this area, then, this dissertation seeks to point up the feminine imagery of rebirth and through that imagery a statement about God.

The second chapter of this dissertation reports the thought of Carl Jung on this subject. A brief preliminary discussion of his basic assumptions is laid out. This is

done primarily so that the reader who is unfamiliar with Jung can have a brief introduction in "basic Jungianism". This chapter secondly seeks to report Jung's definition of rebirth. Thirdly we will look in detail at symbols of transformation which have an important bearing on rebirth. And lastly I shall critique the whole.

The third chapter of this dissertation reports the theology of Paul Tillich on this issue of rebirth. Several areas are looked at in developing the discussion on rebirth from Tillich's point of v.ew. His understanding of human nature is looked at first. The dilemmas he poses are then answered by his understanding of God. The third area discussed here, The Ethical and the Sacramental, seeks to answer the first area of questioning and the second area of questioning, respectively. If there is a rebirth how can we see it? And also how is it ritualized or set apart as an important moment? The fourth section of this chapter discusses Tillich's understanding of symbols. Here is the tie that binds Jung and Tillich, and which discusses my second area of questioning in the most detail. Finally the third chapter will be summed up.

The fourth chapter is my conclusion to the whole. Two points made by both Jung and Tillich will be brought together: first, the definition of rebirth; and second, the symbols of rebirth.

This dissertation will not do two things. First, it will not attempt to discuss baptism beyond the point that

baptism ritualizes and symbolizes rebirth. It will not discuss the pros and cons of when baptism should take place. It would be interesting to probe the discussion of infant or adult baptism.

Second, this dissertation is interested in rebirth into life. Another major area is resurrection or rebirth into life eternal. These two areas do correspond and of necessity compliment each other. The rebirth into life includes life eternal. But it is not within the scope of this paper to develop the relationship. This too would be an intriguing relationship to explore and develop.

CHAPTER II

UNDERSTANDING REBIRTH: CARL JUNG

Rebirth is an integral part of Carl Jung's psychological system, which as a system seeks ultimately to enable persons to attain their full potentiality by attaining "the self". He calls the process by which one does this, individuation, which is a transformation of the individual's life. Rebirth as a part of this process has for its primary symbol the feminine.

For the Christian, an understanding of rebirth is crucial. Today we are called upon to have many "new" understandings. One of those understandings we are called upon to have, is a new understanding of the importance of the feminine both psychologically and religiously. The feminine has been relegated a subordinate position in Christianity. It is time to restate the importance of the feminine in our symbology, not only for personal psychic wholeness, but for institutional stability and the ongoing power of the Christian faith.

A. PRIMARY CONSIDERATIONS

There are three areas of Jung's system which need to be illuminated for an understanding of the discussion of rebirth. Without an understanding of these three areas the

discussion of rebirth would be unintelligible especially for the noninitiate. The three areas of primary consideration are 1) Religion and Psychology, 2) The Collective Unconscious and the Archetypes, and 3) Individuation.

1) Religion and Psychology

Carl Jung's understanding of psychology includes or rather is contained within a religious understanding of life. For Jung, human psychology expresses itself in symbols which have, on the whole, religious significance. His system seems to bridge the science of psychology and the working of the Spirit. The foundation of religious experience must be made clear, so that modern persons can understand and experience the values that religious symbols represent. Jung asserts that by doing this, the modern person can again "participate spiritually in the substance of the Christian message."¹

Perhaps the easiest way to understand this would be to look at myths. Jung says myths are first and foremost psychic phenomena that reveal the nature of the soul. Religious myth gives humanity security and inner strength. A symbol is not an empirical truth, but is a psychological truth.²

¹ C. G. Jung, Collected Works, (New York: Pantheon Book, 1956), V, 229-30

² *Ibid.*, V, 231.

The unconscious psyche assimilates all other sense experiences into inner, psychic events. The unconscious psyche contains myth-forming structural elements. These elements are called archetypes. (In Part 2 we will look more closely at Jung's definition of archetypes.) The mythological components, the archetypes, are "Motifs", "Primordial images", or "types" that appear in myths. Myths express a universal core of meaning. Furthermore, Jung asserts that myths were not written or invented for any conscious purpose. But rather "they were the involuntary revelation of a psychic, but unconscious, pre-condition."³

Jung insists that buried within each of us, each unconscious, there is a "soul". It is the soul in the unconscious which is given expression through myths and other forms like dreams, fantasies, and fairy tales. Discovery of our inner being gives to the conscious mind wholeness or roundness which consciousness lacks. "The soul is the living thing in man (sic), that which lives of itself and causes life... The soul lures into life the inertness of matter that does not want to live."⁴ It is the dawning of the hidden "soul" which creates religious awe when certain symbols are found to express it. The soul is the greatest treasure.

Christian symbols and images have been used to express the revelation of God and the ever-unique experience

³ Ibid., IX:1, 187.

⁴ Ibid., IX:1, 26

of divinity. Unfortunately, however, many images have been objectified and philosophized out of relevancy as symbols. For Jung this destruction of religious symbols is disastrous. Religious symbols attract persons and convince persons of a truth not otherwise perceivable. Religious symbols speak of the divine in ways in which language cannot.⁵ Myths are symbolic expressions of the inner unconscious drama of the psyche which becomes accessible to our consciousness by way of projection. In other words we see in nature that which is happening to our inner being.

A good example of seeing something in the natural world which gives expression to what happens in the inner life is found in the teachings of Jesus. Jesus used natural events to express spiritual truths. For instance, the Nicodemus story (see Preface) contains such incidences. Nicodemus in trying to comprehend Jesus' imperative to be born anew, looks to natural birth as the way this is done. Jesus uses the natural understanding of birth to express the spiritual truth. Also in this same passage he talks about wind to express spirit, again drawing from the natural order to express the spiritual. There are numerous examples of this kind of explanation of the spiritual through the natural. Jesus even says in 3:12, "If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe when I tell you heavenly things?"

⁵ Ibid., IX:1, 8.

Basic to an understanding of Jung is his understanding of "the self". The self for him is a psychic totality, a center, which does not coincide with the ego, but includes it. The self and the psyche may be seen as the totality of our being. The soul or the unconscious is seen as that which is hidden. The conscious or ego is that which is known.

The unconscious and conscious relate in many ways. One of the ways is through symbols and myths. Symbols and myths for Jung are the religious and psychological links for creating wholeness.

On religion and symbolism Jung says that:

The guardians and custodians of symbolical truth, namely the religions, have been robbed of their efficacy by science... Symbolical truth is exposed undefended to the attacks of scientific thought, which can never do justice to such a subject, and in the face of this competition has been unable to hold its ground... Instead of insisting so glibly on the necessity of faith, the theologians, it seems should see what can be done to make this faith possible. But that means placing symbolical truth on a new foundation--a foundation which appeals not only to sentiment, but to reason. And this can only be achieved by reflecting how it came about in the first place that humanity needed the improbability of religious statements, and what it signifies when a totally different spiritual reality is superimposed on the⁶ sensuous and tangible actuality of this world.

2) The Collective Unconscious and the Archetypes

Central to an understanding of Jung and rebirth is an understandning of the collective unconscious and the archetypes.

⁶ Ibid., V, 226-227.

According to Jung, the unconscious has two parts. One is the personal unconscious and the other is the collective unconscious. The personal unconscious is a superficial layer of feeling-toned complexes which reflects one's personal experience. The collective unconscious is a deeper layer which is inborn. It does not derive from personal experiences and is not a personal acquisition. It is universal and is more or less the same in all individuals. It is a common psychic substrate of a suprapersonal nature and is present in every person. The contents of the collective unconscious are the archetypes. An archetype is an unconscious content that has not been submitted to conscious elaboration.

Archetypes have a certain autonomy and a specific energy. The archetypes as symbols are transformers. The archetypes seize the whole personality and are naturally productive of faith.⁷ The meaning of the archetype can only be partially known. The hidden meaning of the archetype produces reverence and devotion because of the truth and validity which they symbolize.⁸

The archetype is an element of our psychic structure and thus a vital and necessary component in our psychic economy. It represents or personifies certain instinctive data of the dark, primitive psyche,⁹ the real but invisible roots of consciousness.

⁷ Ibid., V, 231.

⁸ C. G. Jung, Psyche and Symbol (New York: Doubleday, 1958), pg. 119.

⁹ Ibid., V, 123

It describes how the psyche experiences physical facts and may sometimes be viewed as self-portraits of what is going on in the unconscious. An archetype "is a vessel which we can never empty, and never fill."¹⁰

3) Individuation

The individuation process is the key to Jung's system and is essential for an understanding of rebirth. Individuation is Jung's term for an individual becoming whole, of transforming life, of bridging the unconscious and conscious, of attaining the self. It is a process of integration in which one comes to terms with the contents of the collective unconscious, and in which the unconscious is integrated into consciousness. The goal is illumination or higher consciousness by means of which problems are overcome on a higher level. Individuation enables one to develop the symbolic process which is a rhythm of negative and positive, loss and gain, dark and light.

Individuation is not a simple integration of archetypes by rational means, but is a dialectical procedure, a coming to terms with the archetypes.

Central to this process is the coming together of opposites. Jung says about this that:

There is not consciousness without discrimination of opposites. Nothing can exist without its opposite, the two were one in the beginning and will be one again in the end. Consciousness can only exist through continual recognition of the

10 Ibid., V, 145.

unconscious, just as everything that lives must pass through many deaths.¹¹

When the One is united with the Other, its antithesis, and the opposites are paired, the experience of individuation and the attainment of the self is experienced.

For Jung, knowledge of the unconscious means spiritual well-being. The individuation process is more than a psychological coming to terms with one's self, it is also a religious experience.¹²

There are several archetypes which help the person in the individuation process. They are called archetypes of transformation. One such is the child. The child symbolizes the maturation process and appears when one is in the process of individuation. Often they are bringers of light, that is, enlargers of consciousness because they overcome darkness or earlier unconscious states. Or perhaps a hero appears in the individual psyche which symbolizes the self in cosmic significance when one is in the individuation process. More will be said on these transforming symbols later.

The archetypes are found mainly in dreams. "Dreams are involuntary, spontaneous products of the unconscious psyche and are pure products of nature not falsified by any conscious purpose."¹³

¹¹ C. G. Jung, Collected Works, IX:1, 96.

¹² Ibid., IX:1, 23.

¹³ Ibid., IX:1, 45.

B. A DEFINITION OF REBIRTH

The form of rebirth which is of interest here¹⁴ is what Jung refers to as rebirth or renovatio which is a natural transformation within the span of the individual's life. This rebirth does not seek to change the essential being of the person, but it seeks to change the functions of one's existence.

This form of rebirth may also involve ritual which in and of itself possesses transforming nature. The ritual is more than likely sacred and reveals to the individual the perpetual continuation of life through transformation and renewal.

For one to be reborn in Jung's individuation process there is what he terms an "enlargement of personality."¹⁵ He says of this that:

Richness of mind consists in mental receptivity, not in the accumulation of possessions. What comes to us from outside, and, for that matter, everything that rises up from within, can only be made our own if we are capable of an inner amplitude equal to that of the incoming content. Real increase of personality means consciousness¹⁶ of an enlargement that flows from inner sources.

He describes this beautifully by saying:

When a summit of life is reached, when the bud unfolds and from the lesser the greater emerges...

¹⁴ Ibid., IX:1, 113-129. Here Jung discusses in detail the forms of rebirth. Briefly there are five main forms: 1) metempsychosis, 2) reincarnation, 3) resurrection, 4) renovatio, and 5) participation in the process of transformation. The means by which transformation (rebirth) takes place for the individual are many.

¹⁵ Ibid., IX:1, 120.

¹⁶ Ibid., IX:1, 120.

the greater figure, which one always was but which remained invisible, appears to the lesser personality with the force of a revelation... The person who is inwardly great will know that the long expected friend of his soul, the immortal one, has now really come...to seize hold of him by whom this immortal had always been confined and held prisoner, and to make this life flow into the greater life--a moment of deadliest peril! ... Christ himself is the perfect symbol of the hidden immortal within the mortal man.¹⁷

C. SYMBOLS OF TRANSFORMATION

In the process of individuation which involves the above stated definition of rebirth, there are transforming symbols. "Symbols are not signs or allegories for something known; they seek rather to express something that is little known or completely unknown."¹⁸ The archetypes of transformation are typical situations and places that symbolize the kind of transformation in question. These archetypes are true symbols that cannot be exhaustively interpreted either as signs or allegories. They are ambiguous, paradoxical, and contain a wealth of meaning.

We shall look at four symbols of transformation that are important for an understanding of rebirth. They are the mother, the hermaphrodite, the child, and then rebirth itself.

1. The Mother

The greatest feminine symbol is the mother. Tradition attributes to the feminine only a few symbols and the

¹⁷Ibid., IX:1, 121.

¹⁸Ibid., IX:1, 121.

most positive and negative of all symbols for the feminine is contained in the symbol of the mother. Most of all the symbology of a transformative nature falls under the category of the mother. Over the centuries all that is feminine has been treated both positively and negatively. The present women's movement is seeking to move beyond the traditional interpretation that women must be defined by the mother role and that role only. As we seek to move away from the confines of tradition, we must also reinterpret the mother symbology. This dissertation looks at the mother symbology as it relates to rebirth in a positive light.

The Mother Archetype is pre-existent and supraordinate to all phenomena in which the maternal is manifest. Moreover the mother or matrix is the psychic structure which is the precondition found in every human being. The mother or matrix is the form into which all experience is poured. "The father, on the other hand, represents the dynamism of the archetype, for the archetype consists of both--form and energy."¹⁹

The Mother carries for all humans that inborn image of the mater natura and mater spiritualis, of the totality of life of which we are a small and helpless part. The mother is the carrier of that great experience which includes herself and myself. She is intimately known and yet strange like Nature. Here lies the importance of this archetype, for it is through the world of the archetypes that people are a part

¹⁹ Ibid., IX:1, 102

of Nature and are connected with their roots.

The Mother Archetype appears under an almost infinite variety of symbols such as a personal mother and grandmother, a step-mother, mother-in-law, and other important women with whom one has a relationship; mothers in a figurative sense, i.e., a goddess, the Mother of God, the Virgin and Sophia; the maiden or the beloved; symbols of the mother representing the goal of our longing for redemption such as Paradise, Kingdom of God, or the Heavenly Jerusalem; things arousing devotion or awe such as the Church, university, city, country, heaven, earth, woods, sea, any still waters, matter, the underworld, the moon; things and places standing for fertility and fruitfulness such as cornucopia, a ploughed field, a garden, rock, cave, tree, spring, deep well, vessels, or vessel-shaped flowers like the rose or lotus. Because of the protection it implies the magic circle or mandala can be a form of the mother archetype. There are many others. There are also negative mother images such as the witch, the dragon, any devouring and entwining animals, the grave, the sarcophagus, deep water, death, nightmares and bogies.

The qualities of the mother archetype are maternal solicitude and sympathy; the magic authority of the female; the wisdom and spiritual exaltation that transcends reason; any helpful instinct or impulse; all that is benign, all that cherishes and sustains, that fosters growth and fertility.

The place of transformation and rebirth together with

the underworld and its inhabitants are presided over by the mother.²⁰

Water is interpreted as symbolizing both the mother and the unconscious. The unconscious is seen as a mother symbol because the unconscious is the matrix (mother) of consciousness. Water has a clear maternal significance, because of the generative nature of the sea as the bringer of life, and because of the waters of the womb.

The mother-imago is projected upon the baptismal water of the Church. When the Christian enters into the water, he or she is re-entering the womb, and upon coming out of the water, is reborn. For the Christian, it is the ritual of baptism which begins the process of rebirth into a new reality which is the Christian life. In Roman Catholic liturgy the baptismal font is designated the "uterus ecclesiae".

Almost all images of the mother involve some kind of enclosure symbology because of the birthing place of the womb.

The wood of life or tree of life is also a feminine symbol, quite often a symbol for the mother, for birth or death. Jung describes this imagery in a general way by saying:

The tree of life may have been, in the first instance, a fruit-bearing genealogical tree, and hence a kind of tribal mother. Numerous myths say that human beings came from trees, and many of them tell how the hero was enclosed

²⁰ Ibid., IX:1, 82.

in the maternal tree-trunk... Numerous female deities were worshipped in tree form, and this led to the cult of sacred groves and trees.²¹

The tree also has a bisexual character. The feminine quality of the tree often represents goddesses as was indicated above. But often the goddesses come to possess phallic symbols. "One of the main reasons for this is that, just as the female lies hidden in the male, so the male lies hidden in the female."²²

The rebirth motif in relation to the Mother Archetype of which we are concerned here is a rebirth which is a transformation during one's life through a religious procedure. In this rebirth sequence Jung characterizes it as particularly arising from psychological concerns.

Jung says that psychologically all humanity desires rebirth through what he calls incest, meaning a longing to return to the mother. Actually this means that at one stage in the development of an individual one was united with one's instinct and harmonious animal nature. When one was in the state of unconscious identity with the mother, one was still united with the animal psyche and just as unconscious as it. The development of consciousness leads both to a separation from the mother and the family and also to a relative degree from the unconscious and the world of instinct. The individual, however, longs for this lost world and is often tempted to regress to the infantile past. Because of the

²¹ Ibid., V, 219.

²² Ibid., V, 221.

inability to return to this previous state, a compensating archetype appears. This archetype can enable one to transform oneself into a more positive stage. It is the mother archetype which compensates for the former childhood state. "One such successful interpretation has been, for instance, Mother Church..."²³ Many religions have used this motif of returning to the childhood stage and the mother. Jung sees this evidenced in the predominance of the sun myths in ancient religions.

Another example of this longing to return is seen by Jung in the Nicodemus story of the Gospel of John previously quoted.²⁴ Jung sees this dialogue as expressing the need to transcend reality.

The reason why Jesus' words have such great suggestive power is that they express the symbolical truths which are rooted in the very structure of the human psyche. The empirical truth never frees man (sic) from his bondage to the senses; it only shows him that he was always so and cannot be otherwise. The symbolical truth, on the other hand, puts water in place of the mother and spirit or fire in place of the father... Thus man, as a spiritual being, becomes a child again and is born into a circle of brothers and sisters. But his mother has become the 'communion of Saints,' the Church, and his brothers and sisters are humanity, with whom he is united anew in the common heritage of symbolical truth.²⁵

²³ Ibid., V, 235.

²⁴ See p. iii.

²⁵ Ibid., V, 225

2. The Hermaphrodite.

The hermaphrodite theme has importance in the discussion on rebirth. Wholeness, symbolized in the hermaphrodite, is the goal of Christianity. Rebirth is a process towards that goal. The majority of gods were seen as having a bisexual nature. "Hermaphrodite" means the union of opposites. The union of opposites points backwards to a primitive state of mind where differences and contrasts were barely noticeable. When consciousness began to be clarified, the opposites drew apart and became more distinctive.²⁶

The hermaphrodite symbolizes the creative union of opposites and can be understood literally as a unifying symbol. Functionally, the symbol points toward the future and no longer points back. The hermaphrodite also symbolizes healing and the subduer of conflicts.²⁷

A further function of this symbol is the overcoming or rather the mediation between the unconscious and the conscious. Jung goes on to place the hermaphrodite on even a more important level when he said that the bisexual would symbolize the unity of personality and the ending of the conflict between opposites within the self. The bisexual nature will become the primary being as civilization develops

²⁶ Jung, Psyche and Symbol, 138.

²⁷ Ibid., 139.

and should now be the goal of human development since it has been the projection of unconscious wholeness from the beginning.²⁸

Jung also discusses under the theme of the hermaphrodite the divine syzygies. The syzygies are male-female pairs of deities. This motif pairs the masculine element with the feminine. This pairing is a fundamental psychic factor of great practical importance. The opposite sex of a person is an emotionally charged element in the unconscious. It is always ready to spring forward into projection.

3. The Child.

The Child Archetype is another transforming symbol in individuation, and rebirth. What this archetype portrays is important in the process of inner transformation. It has many meanings, some of which include the symbolization of pre-consciousness. It should be emphasized that the symbolic child is not a copy of the physical child, but a symbol. The child represents a wonder child or a divine child who has as a beginning extraordinary circumstances.²⁹

It is also important as a rebirth motif in religion partly because a new being, or child of God, emerges from rebirth. But also humanity always comes into conflict with its childhood state, its original unconscious and instinctual

²⁸ Ibid., pg. 140.

²⁹ Ibid., pg. 124.

state. Religious observances, stories and rituals, bring the image of the childhood state before the conscious mind in order to unite the original condition with the present state. In this manner the child motif compensates for the one-sidedness of the conscious mind or the rational adult. The unconscious womb gives birth to the child. The child is begotten from the depths of human nature. The child personifies all the vital forces outside of the conscious mind and is that which makes known new possibilities and ways of doing things the one-sided conscious mind knows nothing about. The child symbolizes a wholeness which embraces Nature and it represents the urge of every being to realize itself. But the child also represents the powerlessness of one so small to realize itself. So the symbol of the child is a balance between possibility and probability, strength and weakness, actual and potential, etc.³⁰ What comes to mind here is that strange imperative of Jesus that we become as little children in order to inherit the Kingdom of God.

The archetype of the child expresses humanity's wholeness. The child is beginning and end, an initial and terminal creature. The eternal child is a divine prerogative. The child represents the pre-conscious nature of humanity which empirically speaking is the unconscious state of early childhood. As the representative of the post-conscious nature of humanity, the child archetype anticipates life after

³⁰Ibid., pg. 135-136.

death. The child archetype in this way expresses psychic wholeness. About this wholeness Jung says:

Wholeness is never comprised within the compass of the conscious mind--it includes the indefinite and indefinable extent of the unconscious as well. Wholeness is therefore, empirically speaking of immeasurable extent, older and younger than consciousness and enfolding it in time and space.³¹

The child usually has a miraculous or mysterious birth and dangerous beginnings. This kind of beginning symbolizes a new and unknown content of a creative nature. Moreover this new content has a redemptive significance. The new birth symbolized by the child is the most precious fruit of Mother Nature. The child is pregnant with the future and in this way symbolizes a higher stage of self-realization.³²

The possibility of psychic wholeness is precarious. There are enormous difficulties in achieving this highest level. Symbols like a miraculous birth, or a virgin birth or a rebirth are all non-empirical and point to the difficulty of this achievement. All of these birthing symbols point to the difficulty of individuation. Jung says:

They also signify the powerlessness and helplessness of the life-urge which subjects every growing thing to the law of maximum self-fulfillment, while at the same time the environmental influences place all sorts of insuperable obstacles in the way of individuation.³³

In summation we may say of the child that it expresses

³¹ Ibid., pg. 143-4.

³² Ibid., pg. 133.

³³ Ibid., pg. 130.

the mystery of life which is life itself, a growing into the future.

4. Rebirth.

The symbols of transformation be they the mother archetype, the hermaphrodite, or the child archetype, all point to rebirth. Despite all the psychological statements that Jung has said heretofore, he affirms that:

Rebirth is not a process that we can in any way observe... It is entirely beyond sense perception. We have to do here with a purely psychic reality, which is transmitted to us only indirectly through personal statements. One speaks of rebirth: one professes rebirth: one is filled with rebirth. This we accept as sufficiently real. We are not concerned here with the question is rebirth a tangible process of some sort? ³⁴ We have to be content with its psychic reality.

Jung firmly believes that rebirth is an actual psychic event. What happens is a process that we cannot observe, but which has as an outcome a "new person". This new person is "the other person in ourselves--that larger and greater personality maturing within us, whom we have already met as the inner friend of the soul."³⁵ This inner friend of the soul is our opposite or the immortal one who accompanies our mortal self always. Jung affirms that these two parts can never be one, but that the transformation process strives to approximate them to one another. Our consciousness resists this inner being. This kind of trans-

³⁴ Jung, Collected Works, IX:1, 116.

³⁵ Ibid., IX:1, 130-1.

formation is seen not as a personal transformation "but the transformation of what is mortal in me into what is immortal".³⁶ In the terms used by Paul, we could equate the mortal and immortal part of our consciousness as sark and pneuma, flesh and spirit.

Moreover, it is the unconscious content of this inner being, this immortal part of our beings, which provides consciousness with all its energy. Jung says that the influence of the unconscious contents has a nourishing influence on consciousness by this continual influx of energy. This root of consciousness is that which is capable of transformation. The transformative substance has a nourishing character. If we look at the Christ as a transformer, then we see how the symbol of him as the bread of life, as the fish, is the nourishing influence on us. Often the unconscious is symbolized in our dreams by something alien, for in the view of consciousness, the unconscious is alien. The unconscious content, the inner being, potentially contains the round wholeness which consciousness lacks. The personification of this inner being represents the higher unity of conscious and unconscious. It is the center of our psychic whole. Rebirth is rebirth of this inner being.

The mystery of rebirth points to the yearning we as mortals have for immortality, for life beyond consciousness and also and perhaps even more so the yearning for a present

³⁶ Ibid., IX:1, 134.

life which is more abundant. During transformation we intuitively feel the presence of God and immortality. The unconscious "is, in a sense, non-spatial and non-temporal."³⁷

D. CRITIQUE: UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIAN REBIRTH
THROUGH FEMININE IMAGERY.

Our faith as Christians is expressed primarily through language. We hear the sermons exposing God and are called to faith. We hear the words of institution over the Lord's Table, and participate in his sacrifice and forgiveness. We offer prayers and meditations with words. Words express our faith. Often we use symbolic language to enable the divine mystery to be made understandable. We use metaphors, analogies and myths to express the divine reality. Our Christian language is symbolic. Symbols point beyond themselves to a reality which transcends them.

Traditionally our Christian faith has been overloaded by masculine imagery of divinity: Father, Son, and the Brotherhood of Man. For many such imagery no longer conveys transformation of divine reality partly because these symbols exclude the feminine quality of life and divinity, and therefore, for many, the sense of awe is left out and the feeling of being excluded becomes real. The one-sidedness of the symbols we use in expressing the Christian faith does a disservice to both the Trinity and to humanity.

³⁷ Ibid., IX:1, 142.

When Jung stated that the theological task of today was to place symbolical truth on a new foundation, he not only pointed to a new theology which could withstand the scientific age, but a new theology which embraced a symbolical truth in a wholistic framework. The movement toward a wholistic theology includes feminine experience and feminine symbols and imagery. The Bible abounds with feminine imagery, but yet it is rarely acknowledged as such or it is given over to a masculine god or principle. We have been taught that the male can easily represent the female experience, but not vise versa. This reasoning has led to the idea that God can be expressed in male language while symbolically expressing the feminine experience. The feminine experience of birthing and nurturing is often alluded to in symbolic terms, like rebirth, but is given over to a male god.

Rebirth is integral to our faith and occurs ritually in baptism. The sacrament of baptism is essential for the life of the church for primarily this reason. It renews, heals, strengthens and improves the spirituality of the individual. It gives one a rebirth. Rebirth in this way increases the spiritual reality and satisfies the yearning for immortality by revealing the perpetual continuation of life. Rebirth is a transformation of life. It is an increase of that which was before in that one has been "born of water and the spirit". It is as though Divine Being is freed from the depths of one's own being. And like the revelation in Jesus Christ, the infinite was within the

finite person. It is as though this same reality and transforming spirit lies hidden within each one of us awaiting the rebirth.

Rebirth through baptism transforms one's being during life. That which occurred in Jesus Christ is a reality to be realized in the believer. Jung understands the baptismal waters as a feminine symbol. Psychologically and religiously this symbol enables one to return to the reality which has been lost because of human existence. Rebirth seeks to reunite the human with the divine. It is a truth which unites opposites. It is as though our heightened consciousness merely re-emphasized the need for reuniting with that which is infinite and these symbols aid us in this process. As I see it the rebirth symbol is feminine stating in symbolic terms that this is a reality which is inherent to faith and religious experience.

Rebirth enhances the newness of life as seen in the child emerging from the mother. Rebirthing is creating a new individual which has a redemptive quality. This redemptiveness is the wholeness of spirituality, and a higher state of self-realization. Life is a mystery of growth into a future unknown. Rebirth is accountable to that mystery only, and not to a scientifically measured experiment. Who is to say what effect there is on a person? The imperative remains for those who embrace Christianity, "unless you become as little children...."

And what of God? Is God only revealed to us through masculine imagery? God is herein expressed through symbolic truth which includes feminine transforming experience.

CHAPTER III

UNDERSTANDING REBIRTH: PAUL TILLICH

To approach rebirth in a Christian understanding we shall now move from psychology of religion to theology. Paul Tillich's theology is relied upon here because of his understanding of human nature and his understanding of God and the interaction between the two dimensions. Tillich makes sense to me in that he sees God's revelation active in the human sphere and because he states his theology in what is a viable, believable and understandable manner. I see his bringing together of God and humanity as a statement of rebirth. He talks about the problems inherent in human nature and just how God provides the answer for the problems. I shall look at Tillich for this reason.

The approach to Tillich on the question of rebirth shall take the following course. First we shall see how Tillich views the human predicament and how humans seek a life which is whole or in his words unambiguous. I understand the beginning of the answer to the human problems as rebirth. Second we shall look at the way in which God provides the answer to the problems of human existence through the revelation of God and the presence of God. Third we shall look at two areas of concern for the question of rebirth,

namely, the ethical dimension and the sacramental aspect. And fourth we shall look at Tillich's analysis of symbols as the way to a knowledge of God.

A. THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT AND THE QUEST FOR UNAMBIGUOUS LIFE.

The human predicament for Tillich is one in which the individual finds her or himself separated: a separation from the self, the neighbor and God. This is the basic "problem" of humanity in general. Tillich's theology is one in which he systematically responds to the human predicament in terms of the Christian faith. He states in theological terms how it is that humans are separated and the way in which one can become reunited with one's self, one's neighbor and God. This reunion is seen in "rebirth". Rebirth is reunion with one's essential self and with God. It is that which enables one to become who one ought to be, meaning that one can actualize one's potential when united with God. The quest for unambiguous life is the quest "for a life which has reached that toward which it transcends itself."¹

Life has two elements, essential and existential elements. These are separated and form the root of all the ambiguities of life. The essential power is behind and within the existential. The essential is a determining power which is directive not casual. What is reunited is the essential and existential elements. This reunion is unambiguous life. Unambiguous life means that the potentialities in one's

¹Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), III, 105.

life become actualities. The creation of unambiguous life is not something which can be created by the individual. It involves the transcendent dimension which is God.

Tillich describes one state in which humankind is essentially united with that to which she or he belongs. This is the state of mere potentiality or created innocence. That to which humans belong is the divine ground of the world and one's self. The state of potentiality is broken in existence.

The human is aware in her or his predicament that there is this separation with what is essential, actual, or infinite and existential, potential and finite. We are aware as humans that we are separated from God and the ongoingness of life because of death. Humanity searches for the continuity of life and the meaning of life, a coming together of the self with God.

For Tillich the quest for unambiguous life arising from the human predicament can only be answered by God. It is the Spirit of God, or the Spiritual Presence, that creates unambiguous life. As was stated above, we are aware of our separation from God, but even in our own self-transcendence we can reach for it, but not grasp it. We can only know unambiguous life if we are first grasped by the Spiritual Presence. The individual is driven to ask the question of the meaning of life, but the answer comes first through the Spiritual Presence.²

²Ibid., III, 112.

Jesus as the Christ is related to that historical development of which he is the center, determining its beginning and its end. It begins the moment human beings start realizing their existential estrangement and raise the question of the New Being. Obviously, such a beginning cannot be determined by historical research but must be told in legendary and mythical terms..."

When humans became aware of their predicament and asked whether or not the problem could be overcome by a new reality, the way was made open for an understanding of God's revelation in the Christ.⁴

In the context of the human predicament and the quest for unambiguous life, rebirth is the beginning of the process toward overcoming the separation which causes the predicament. The question asked by humans begins the process which is then the quest for unambiguous life. Rebirth for Christians means the beginning of the overcoming of separation from self, God, and neighbor, a process moving towards reunion and wholeness.

Through the New Being revealed in Jesus Christ and the Spiritual Presence we are given both the form and the dynamic to reunite. As was just stated above the Spiritual Presence grasps humankind driving us to ask the question of the meaning of life. We then turn to the question of the New Being. Rebirth enables us to be reborn into this new being. We shall now look in more detail at Tillich's understanding of the New Being and the Spiritual Presence in the context of rebirth.

³Ibid., II, 100.

⁴Ibid., II, 138.

B. THE NEW BEING AND THE SPIRITUAL PRESENCE.

The New Being and the Spiritual Presence are intimately tied together. It is because of the final revelation in Jesus as the Christ that we can be reborn by the Spiritual Presence and so overcome our estrangement from God and be reunited with our self.

Jesus as the Christ is the final revelation. The final revelation is described in the following way:

A revelation is final if it has the power of negating itself without losing itself. This paradox is based on the fact that every revelation is conditioned by the medium in and through which it appears. The question of the final revelation is the question of a medium of revelation which overcomes its own finite conditions by sacrificing them, and itself with them... He becomes completely transparent to the mystery he reveals. But, in order to be able to surrender himself completely, he must possess himself completely. And only he can possess--and therefore surrender--himself completely who is united with the ground of his being and meaning without separation and disruption.⁵

There are two outstanding characteristics about Jesus as the Christ. The first is his maintenance of unity with God, and the second is his sacrifice of everything he could have gained for himself from this unity. Jesus united God, the ground of all being, with the human ambiguities of life. Jesus was transparent to the divine. God was present in him. Because of the union of the essential and existential, Jesus was the New Being.⁶

⁵ Ibid., I, 133.

⁶ Ibid., I, 135

The New Being in Jesus as the Christ is that which brings to humankind "the 'new eon', the universal regeneration, the new reality."⁷ This new reality opposes the old reality of estrangement of humanity from God. The universal human expectation of a new reality was answered in Jesus as the Messiah. Tillich says of the Messiah in respect to the new reality that:

The history of the symbol 'Messiah' ('Christ') shows that its origin transcends both Christianity and Judaism, thus confirming the universal human expectation of a new reality... The Messiah does not save individuals in a path leading out of historical existence; he is to transform historical existence. The individual enters a new reality which embraces society and nature. In messianic thought, the New Being does not demand the sacrifice of finite being; instead it fulfills all finite being by conquering its estrangement.

The New Being overcomes the problems inherent in human existence: disruption, conflict, self-destruction, meaninglessness, despair, and self-estrangement. The reality of the New Being is one of reconciliation and reunion, of creativity, actuality, meaning and hope.

When Paul speaks of being "in" Christ he speaks of participation. We can participate in the newness of the New Being and also become new persons (creatures). This happens by way of a creative act of the Spirit by participation in Christ. Jesus conquered the existential and essential nature of humanity both in power and as a beginning. New Being is a restorative principle--it restores essential and existential

⁷ Ibid., II, 27.

⁸ Ibid., 88.

Being. The New Being is new because essential being is manifested within and under the conditions of existence.⁹

Tillich goes on to describe the newness of the New Being by saying:

It is new in two respects: it is new in contrast to the merely potential character of essential being; and it is new over against the estranged character of existential being. It is actual, conquering the estrangement of actual existence.¹⁰

Because of the New Being in Jesus as the Christ, humanity is given the opportunity to participate in the New Being, becoming new creatures. Furthermore, becoming this new creature in person by participation in the New Being means becoming a child of God. We become children of God when we participate in the Christ. Jesus "re-establishes the child character of every person in relation to God."¹¹ All who participate in his being are given unity between God and humanity, between essence and existence.

Tillich describes the relation of the New Being to those who are grasped by it as follows:

This relation can be called 'grasping and drawing into itself,' producing the state which Paul calls 'being in Christ.' The classical terms for this state are 'New Birth,' "Regeneration," 'being a new creature.' Obviously, the characteristics of the New Being are the opposite of those of estrangement, namely, faith instead of unbelief,¹²

⁹ Ibid., II, 118.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., II, 110.

¹² Unbelief here means removing one's center from the divine center.

surrender instead of hubris,¹³ love instead of concupiscence¹⁴... Regeneration is a state of things universally. It is the new state of things, the new eon, which the Christ brought, the individual 'enters it', and in so doing participates in it and is reborn through participation. The objective reality of the New Being precedes subjective participation in it. The message of conversion is, first, the message of a new reality to which one is asked to turn; in the light of it, one is to move away from the old reality, the state of existential estrangement in which one has lived.¹⁵

All persons quest for the New Being. It is a universal yearning because of the fact of the ambiguous human predicament. The New Being can only "save" if one participates in it. The new birth or rebirth comes about by being grasped by the Spiritual Presence.¹⁶

The New Being when experienced as creation is a re-birth or regenerating experience. Experience means that one is aware that she or he has been grasped by the Spiritual Presence. Experience includes participation in what one believes with certainty.

How do we know when we are experiencing rebirth? One "who is ultimately concerned about his state of estrangement and about the possibility of reunion with the ground

¹³ Hubris here means making oneself the center of oneself and the world.

¹⁴ Concupiscence here means the desire to draw the whole of reality into oneself.

¹⁵ Tillich, II, 177.

¹⁶ Ibid., III, 222.

and aim of his being is already in the grip of the Spiritual Presence."¹⁷ This certainly answers the question "what can I do in order to experience the new life?"

Being under the impact of the Spiritual Presence answers many human problems. One such is the continual dilemma that humans face in the alternative of sacrificing the actual for the possible or the possible for the actual. This problem is resolved by the Spiritual Presence, even though it is fragmentary. Our personal centers are taken into God which makes faith and love possible. The Spiritual Presence liberates the person from the human predicament. The person is called upon to accept this liberation.¹⁸

Just as we universally search for the new reality in the New Being, so too we search for the Spiritual Presence which is that which re-establishes the centered self although fragmentarily. Overcoming the subject-object split can only be done from the vertical direction whereby reunion is given.

The reunion provided by the vertical dimension relates the individual through the divine spirit to the divine ground of being. This reunion with the divine ground includes the knowledge of the "depth" of the divine.¹⁹ We are given the opportunity to be liberated and to know that which is divine.

Unfortunately we cannot attain "perfection". Actualization of all the creative possibilities of a person and the

¹⁷ Ibid., III, 223.

¹⁸ Ibid., III, 269.

¹⁹ Ibid., III, 117.

human race is impossible. Tillich says that:

The Spiritual Presence does not change that situation--for although the finite can participate in the infinite, it cannot become infinite--but the Spirit can create an acceptance of man's (sic) and mankind's finitude, and in so doing can give a new meaning to the sacrifice of potentialities...²⁰

This sacrifice of potentiality means that the ideal of a well-rounded personality in which all potentialities are actualized is excluded. All human potentialities are sacrificed for the sake of one potential which the individual cannot actualize--the uninterrupted unity with God.

Our salvation rests with the reunion with the ground of being. The ultimate salvation is also the ultimate revelation, the "vision of God", in the Christian message. Salvation is applied to every act of healing and takes place now in time and history. Salvation and revelation are interdependent, being based on the event of Jesus as the Christ. Tillich says of salvation and revelation that:

Revelation as it is received by humanity living under the conditions of existence is always fragmentary; so is salvation. Revelation and salvation are final, complete, and unchangeable with respect to the revealing and saving event; they are preliminary, fragmentary and changeable with respect to the persons who receive revelatory truth and saving power. In terms of classical theology one could say that no one can receive revelation except through the divine Spirit and that, if someone is grasped by the divine Spirit, the center of his personality is transformed; he has received saving power.²¹

²⁰ Ibid., III, 271.

²¹ Ibid., I, 146.

C. THE ETHICAL AND THE SACRAMENTAL.

Through the ethical dimension and the sacramental aspect of our Christian understanding of New Being and Spiritual Presence, we are called to "act out" that by which we are grasped. What shapes our behaviour is inherent in the problem of rebirth. The ethical question is "if one is reborn is there a change?" The sacramental aspect is studied because baptism symbolizes rebirth. Tillich has a good deal to say on both the ethical and the sacramental.

1) The Ethical Dimension.

If one is reborn by participation in the New Being and is thereby grasped by the Spiritual Presence, what can be expected of that person? We can first say that the one who is grasped has faith. The following can be said about faith:

Faith has three elements: first, the element of being opened up by the Spiritual Presence; second, the element of accepting it in spite of the infinite gap between the divine Spirit and the human spirit; and third, the element of expecting final participation²² in the transcendent unity of unambiguous life.

In other words these elements show faith in its receptive character, or its passivity in relation to the divine Spirit; in its paradoxical character, or its courage in face of the Spiritual Presence; and its anticipatory character or hope for fulfillment.

Obedience in faith means remaining open to the Spiritual Presence which has grasped and opened us. This obedience is one of participation, not submission or subjec-

²² Ibid., III, 133.

tion to a divine-human authority.

By being grasped by the Spiritual Presence when one is reborn, the personal self can expect to change. The identity of the personal self is maintained, but it is also altered. The individuality of the person is maintained and the ability to actualize oneself is made possible. "Where there is Spirit, the actual manifests the potential and the potential determines the actual."²³ The reality of the New Being and the Spiritual Presence enables persons to conquer the problems of existence. This is possible because the Christ united God and humanity under the conditions of existence. Those who are reborn into the reality of the New Being are beyond the conflicts of the essential and existential predicaments. "The Spiritual Presence actualizes the essential within the existential in an unambiguous way."²⁴

This discussion seems to point to a new understanding of reality which transcends the old understanding. Humans cannot "fulfill" the imperatives laid before us by the New Being in Jesus as the Christ as seen in the Synoptics. Jesus' requirement to decide for the Kingdom of God could never be fulfilled under the conditions of existence. It is only through the Spiritual Presence of the New Being that there is a chance for fulfillment. The new reality transcends this legalistic understanding of Jesus' call to decide for or against the Kingdom or to obey his teachings. The new reality

²³ Ibid., III, 269-70.

²⁴ Ibid.

through the Spiritual Presence grasps the personal center and unites the essential and existential elements. Tillich says that,

He who knows God or the Christ in the sense of being grasped by him and being united with him does the good. He who knows the essential structure of things in the sense of having received their meaning and power acts according to them: he does the good, even if he has to die for it.²⁵

Humanity's actual reception of New Being is still ambiguous, "for it occurs in the changing forms of humanity's moral and cultural existence."²⁶ Being grasped by the Spiritual Presence is not open to empirical observation. Though we experience rebirth we are not totally new beings, but we have entered a new reality which enables us to become new beings. "participating in the New Being does not automatically guarantee that one is new."²⁷

Tillich lists the criteria for a doctrine of future life under the Spiritual Presence as follows:

One may give the following principles: first increasing awareness; second, increasing freedom; third, increasing relatedness; fourth, increasing transcendence. How these principles will unite in a new type of life under the Spiritual Presence cannot be described before it happens, but elements of such a life can be seen in individuals and groups who anticipated what may possibly lie in the future.²⁸

The principle of awareness means that the individual becomes increasingly aware of his or her situation and his

²⁵ Ibid., I, 95-6.

²⁶ Ibid., III, 104.

²⁷ Ibid., III, 222.

²⁸ Ibid., III, 223.

or her humanity and also becomes aware of answers to the questions implied in this situation. This awareness leads to an awareness of the ambiguities within one's own life, and to the ability to affirm life in spite of life's ambiguities. Tillich defines awareness as follows:

Such awareness includes sensitivity toward the hidden hopes and disappointments within others, toward the voiceless voice of a concrete situation, toward the grades of authenticity in the life of the spirit in others and oneself. All this is not a matter of cultural education or sophistication but of growth under the impact of the Spiritual power and it is therefore noticeable in ²⁹ every human being who is open to this impact.

The principle of increasing freedom means freedom of the self from slavery to the objects s/he has produced; it means also freedom from the law. Freedom from the law is only fragmentary. Being reunited with our selves, God and neighbors, enables us to actualize that which is essential in freedom without command.³⁰

The principle of increasing relatedness implies "the awareness of the other one and the freedom to relate to him by overcoming self-seclusion within oneself and with the other one."³¹ The personal center turns toward ~~the vertical dimension~~³² and its height. "Relatedness needs the vertical dimension

²⁹ Ibid., III, 231.

³⁰ Ibid., III, 234.

³¹ Ibid.

in order to actualize itself in the horizontal dimension."³²

Increasing relatedness is encouraged by the process of sanctification or the process toward Spiritual maturity. This process creates a mature self-relatedness through which self-acceptance conquers the opposites of self-elevation and self-contempt so that the individual can truly reunite with one's self. This mature self-relatedness enables one to spontaneously affirm one's essential being. "As the process of sanctification approaches a more mature self-relatedness, the individual is more spontaneous, more self-affirming, without self-elevation or self-humiliation."³³

The principle of self-transcendence basically means participation in the holy. It means a continuous transcendence of oneself in the direction of the ultimate. The Christian life is a life of maturity in all four of these areas.

The answer to the ethical dimension is then, that our action may stem from our reunion with God. As Tillich says:

He who is united with the will of God voluntarily acts and does more than any law commands. He acts out of participation, not out of the relation of command and obedience. He who does not participate in the being of God, which is the being of love, cannot act according to God's being. He who does not ³⁴participate in the good itself cannot be good.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid., III, 234-5

³⁴ Paul Tillich, Biblical Religion & the Search for Ultimate Reality (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), P. 69.

2) The Sacramental Aspect.

In this section the affirmation of the importance of the sacrament of baptism is made. Baptism is the ritualized acting out of rebirth: the symbol of the symbol. We will look briefly at the importance of symbols, the ritual of baptism, being seen here as symbolically expressing rebirth. We shall also probe the symbolic meaning of water as seen by Tillich. The next section "On Symbols" will more greatly develop this line of thought.

As the section "On Symbols" will explain, symbols, rituals and myths express the divine, God. As Tillich says, "symbolic language alone is able to express the ultimate."³⁵ Symbols are important because they open up dimensions and elements of reality that would otherwise remain obscure. It is our soul which responds to symbols. Symbols unlock doors within that correspond to doors without.

The Christian understanding of rebirth is ritualized in the sacrament of baptism. The problem with rebirth being ritualized in the sacrament of baptism is twofold: one, rebirth does not necessarily begin here. Rebirth happens whenever one is grasped by the Spiritual Presence. Rebirth can happen at any point. Receiving the New Being is a part of the function of the Spiritual Presence. The most important thing about rebirth is that it is a process as was seen in the section on the ethical dimension. It involves increasing

³⁵ Paul Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), p. 41.

transformation and reunion. Rebirth means continual participation.

The second problem with rebirth being ritualized is that because of different church traditions we have two kinds of baptism, one infant, the other adult. As was stated earlier this dissertation is not written for an understanding of baptism or arguments pro or con for infant or adult baptism, but rather it is written for an understanding of rebirth. Baptism needs to be mentioned for an understanding of rebirth for they belong together in the sacramental aspect of the church's tradition. Moreover baptism symbolically and ritually expresses rebirth.

But even though there are problems as stated above there are some important positive aspects to the sacrament of baptism. First Tillich affirms the need for the Spirit to be received through sacraments. And second he affirms the important part sacraments such as baptism play in the life of the individual person and the community of faith.

Tillich discusses, at one point, how the church in its development has reduced the sacramental manifestation of the Spirit. As a result of this reduction, the Spirit has become intellectual or moral or mystical. He says about this issue:

In light of the twentieth-century rediscovery of the unconscious, it is now possible for Christian theology to re-evaluate positively the sacramental mediation of the Spirit. One could even say that a Spiritual Presence apprehended through the consciousness alone is intellectual and not truly Spiritual. This means that the Spiritual Presence cannot be

received without a sacramental element,
however hidden the latter may be.³⁶

In another essay Tillich speaks about the sacrament of baptism and how the Spirit is received through the symbol of water in baptism. As he indicated above the sacramental element may be quite hidden although necessary.

Tillich in his essay on "Water"³⁷ finds in many Biblical passages the relationship between water and creation. He speaks directly of the sacrament of baptism as expressing this relationship and this tension. "The water takes back what it formed from itself (immersion), and gives forth something new from itself (rebirth)."³⁸

Tillich is developing in this essay the importance of the symbol of water especially as it functions in the sacrament of baptism. He begins by looking to Thales. Thales has been attributed with saying, "But the best of all things is Water."³⁹ Water, here, was thought to have been able to express the nature of all things. This means that

in water the arche, principle of being, is envisaged. It is not as if the arche were something behind water, but that water for Thales had the quality of being more than mere

³⁶ Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 122.

³⁷ James Luther Adams, Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Culture, Science & Religion (New York: Harper & Row, 1965) 62-64.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 63

³⁹ Ibid., p. 62

water as such, namely the principle of all being."⁴⁰

Next, in his research on Water, Tillich turns to Anaximander. Anaximander expresses the tension between water and creation that is found in baptism by saying:

"And into that source from which things arise that are, they must pass away, according to necessity; for they must pay the penalty and make atonement to one another for their injustice according to the decree of Time."⁴¹

Anaximander calls the principle from which creation receives its birth "the Infinite". Tillich asserts that "the Infinite" has the same qualities that water has for Thales. Tillich expresses his understanding of Anaximander's statement in the following way:

Out of chaos we come and into chaos we return, bound by the tragic decree of our guilt. Similarly, yet in quite another way, in baptism the same man (sic) who is taken back by water comes forth from water again, although now he is a different man... So the chaos force of water is expressed in its power to swallow up death and bring to birth again."⁴²

Tillich sees that symbolically what is being expressed in the birthing process. He says:

Water receives a special depth of significance from the fact that man (sic), like many other living beings, is enveloped in the amniotic fluid of the mother's body, so that in the strictest sense his birth is an issuing from water.⁴³

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 63

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

Tillich describes the Nicodemus story in the Gospel of John and sees again the connection of the person emerging from chaos into form, from the womb to new life, from the baptismal waters to new creaturehood.

The question in Tillich's mind as he writes this essay on "Water" is the same one which we saw earlier. In order to receive the Spirit there must be a sacramental element. The reduction of the sacramental manifestation of the Spirit to intellectual or moral or mystical understandings has been destructive for the life of faith. He asserts that it is important for us today to rediscover the sacraments and to understand water as having its own sacramental significance. He concludes his discourse on "Water" by affirming this need:

Hence we must ask if the spiritual situation that created the sacraments did not have access to sacramental elements that have been lost to us and can only be re-discovered by the round-about ways of my theology and psychoanalysis. If we can obtain access to these elements today, we shall understand that water is not contingently and externally symbolic, but has reached sacramental significance by its own intrinsic power of being.⁴⁴

The second important or positive aspect of the sacrament of baptism is that a sacrament is of great importance in the life of the individual believer and the community of faith. The first religious experience for the individual is usually the participation in the New Being, or becoming a creation of the Spirit. Affirming this in baptism is important. It also helps to actualize the

⁴⁴Ibid, p. 64.

spiritual community.⁴⁵

D. ON SYMBOLS.

Tillich has done a great service to the theological discussion by his discussion and interpretation of symbols and the meaning of symbols in the disclosure of faith.

The most basic understanding of a symbol is that it points to something beyond itself,⁴⁶ and at the same time it participates in the reality it symbolizes.⁴⁷ The difference between the symbol and the sign is that the symbol does participate in the reality of that for which it stands while the sign bears no necessary relation to that to which it points.⁴⁸

The truth of a symbol is a double truth and meaning: both the symbol and the revelation which the symbol is expressing are true. In Tillich's words, "a symbol has truth: it is adequate to the revelation it expresses. A symbol is true: it is the expression of a true revelation."⁴⁹

Symbols also have double direction. "They are directed toward the infinite which they symbolize and toward the finite through which they symbolize it.⁵⁰ In this way

⁴⁵ Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 222-3.

⁴⁶ Ibid., I, 239.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid., I, 177.

⁵⁰ Ibid., I, 240.

the infinite is relevant to the finite and the finite is relevant to the infinite.

The truth, meaning and direction of the symbol is very important for this discussion on rebirth. In the previous sections of this chapter we have discussed in theological terms what rebirth in a Christian understanding means. We saw that rebirth could only happen through participation in Jesus as the Christ, the New Being. And we saw that through the Spiritual Presence the separation of one's self from the self, God and neighbour was overcome. In this discussion here "On Symbols" we shall look at why the symbol of a second birth through water and the spirit is so closely related to the actual physical birth and how the feminine imagery can be understood in theological as well as psychological terms.

Tillich affirms in his discussion on symbols that in order to give meaning to what is being said about God's revelation it is of necessity that we use material taken from reality.⁵¹ The symbols we use to give expression to divine activity are taken from the human experience. We look at the divine as personal, dynamic and free.⁵² Even though the symbols used for the divine life are taken from the experience of humans in relationship to God, the symbols imply ultimacy.⁵³

⁵¹ Ibid.. I, 131.

⁵² Ibid., I, 243.

⁵³ Ibid., I, 244.

Tillich says about this that:

There can be no doubt that any concrete assertion about God must be symbolic, for a concrete assertion is one which uses a segment of finite experience in order to say something about him. It transcends the content of this segment, although it also includes it. The segment of finite reality which becomes the vehicle of a concrete assertion about God is affirmed and negated at the same time. It becomes a symbol, for a symbolic expression is one whose proper meaning is negated by that to which it points. And yet it also is affirmed by it, and this affirmation gives the symbolic expression an adequate basis for pointing beyond itself.

The crucial question must now be faced. Can a segment of finite reality become the basis for an assertion about that which is infinite? The answer is that it can, because that which is infinite is being-itself and because everything participates in being-itself.⁵⁴

Therefore, rebirth points to the divine through the feminine symbol of birth. It is a true symbol because it participates in the power of the divine to enable persons to be reborn of the Spirit. It is a true symbol as feminine, for God is Being Itself encompassing the feminine experience of giving birth. The symbol of the physical birth is a segment of finite experience. Even though the actual finite experience is transcended and given new meaning through an understanding of rebirth, the actual physical reality of birthing is affirmed. The physical birth process in this instance is a vehicle for a concrete assertion about God. The empirical statement says that God causes a new birth into a new reality revealed by the New Being. The symbol of being reborn negates and affirms the birth motif. It is negated because it points beyond itself to something divine, but at

⁵⁴ Ibid., I, 239-240.

the same time it affirms the finite experience. Tillich says that the religious symbol cannot be invented:

One cannot arbitrarily 'make' a religious symbol out of a segment of secular reality. Not even the collective unconscious, the great symbol-creating source, can do this. If a segment of reality is used as a symbol for God, the realm of reality from which it is taken is, so to speak, elevated into the realm of the holy.⁵⁵

Through the symbol of rebirth we learn something more about God. Rebirth is a symbol which expresses a quality of being in relation to God. God participates in life as the ground of every life and the aim of it also. God's participation is to be understood symbolically, not spatially or temporally.⁵⁶ Rebirth is a symbol for the participation of the ground of being and the self as process. Rebirth symbolizes the process of the quality of being becoming the actuality of being, of God as the aim of life. Rebirth symbolizes the process of the inner directedness of life moving toward Spirit, and the urge within one's life to fulfill one's own nature which is spirit.

The truth of the symbol of rebirth is that it does adequately express the relationship between a person and the final revelation.⁵⁸ Rebirth points to a beginning of a process whereby God and the New Being participate in the

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., I, 245.

⁵⁷ Ibid., I, 249.

⁵⁸ Ibid., I, 240.

individual life in which the relationship between the final revelation and the individual is becoming actual. This symbol adequately expresses "the mystery which appears in revelation and which remains a mystery in its appearance."⁵⁹

God must be spoken of in symbolic terms. "God lives in so far as he is the ground of life. Anthropomorphic symbols are adequate for speaking of God religiously."⁶⁰ We know God only through symbolic expressions.⁶¹ The symbolic expression that God causes us to be reborn into a new reality points to an understanding of God and the revelation of God. We see in this symbol a God who is at the very basis of our existence, who provides our essence. We see in this symbol a God who works in our lives through the Spirit pointing us toward the new reality. God's revelation of the New Being in Jesus as the Christ is seen in this symbol, for it is this New Being to which we are born again. Rebirth is a symbol for the active participation of the trinity in our lives. No other imagery than a reference to the physical birthing process and the symbol of water as such could fit the meaning of God as ground, New Being and Presence.

As Tillich says the divine life is expressed well in the trinitarian formula of the dynamic unity of depth and form. God is the depth who makes revelation mysterious.

⁵⁹ Ibid., I, 156.

⁶⁰ Ibid., I, 241.

⁶¹ Ibid., I, 131.

Jesus is the form who makes revelation of the mystery possible. And the Holy Spirit enables the mystery to be received.⁶² The divine life is expressed well in the symbol of rebirth. And moreover the symbol of rebirth being told in feminine terms transcends the one sided male determined symbolism.⁶³

Tillich even speaks of the ground of being as feminine when he says of it that it is:

...Partly conceptual, partly symbolical. In so far as it is symbolical, it points to the mother-quality of giving birth, carrying, and embracing, and, at the same time, of calling back, resisting⁶⁴ independence of the created, and swallowing it.

He goes on to say that the theological statement that God is the power of being in all being reduces the male element in the symbolization of the divine.⁶⁵

Even though Tillich did not develop the emphasis on the feminine in divinity,⁶⁶ his theology lends itself to an interpretation of the feminine in divinity as was hopefully shown above.

⁶² Ibid., I, 156.

⁶³ Ibid., III, 293-4

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ It should be noted that only on the pages just cited can be found reference to the feminine in The Systematic Theology. However, as was seen above in the sacramental aspect he develops the theme of water and the feminine.

E. SUMMATION.

In this "Summation" the two areas of original questioning will be answered.

First, Rebirth has been seen in this section as reunion with self, other and God. It means reunion with the essential self; a life which has reached that toward which it transcends itself. Unambiguous life begins when one is reborn.

After the initial "rebirth", the individual becomes reunited with what was originally given. It begins a process of actualizing the potential. Originally the human being was whole; our essential and existential elements were united. The New Being was given to restore this wholeness of our originality.

The function of the Spiritual Presence is to help the individual transcend herself or himself. The ambiguities of life are raised above the individual. This transcendence cannot begin through the human power. It begins only when the human is grasped by the Spiritual Presence. New Being is created through agape. It can never be commanded or achieved through obedience to any law.

Jesus as the Christ is the center of the historical development, and determines its beginning and end. The beginning for Tillich is when we realize our situation of estrangement and raise the question of the New Being. All persons everywhere can ask this question and can receive the healing of it no matter what their "religion". This

beginning is related in legendary and mythical terms such as the Nicodemus story which says in part:

That which is born of the flesh is flesh;
and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.

Marvel not that I said unto them, Ye must be born again.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

A new reality can overcome our existential predicament. That is why we were given the New Being in Jesus as the Christ and the Spiritual Presence.

Jesus as the Christ was united with the ground of his being without separation. Each person has this same ground of being only we are radically separated from it.

The reality of Jesus as the Christ transcended finite reality. Our faith does not rest in the historical person of Jesus, but rather our faith rests in the New Being that he was. The historical person was crucified. The crucifixion means that we are liberated from any legalistic understanding of his actions on earth. But as the crucified and resurrected one we see in him New Being. The things that he did take on new meaning. Through the crucifixion and resurrection he became New Being. He was not equal with God, but was united with God. Those things which he did were the things of God. They expressed the New Being. They transcend finite reality and so in and of themselves are not grace and truth, but what they are transparent to are grace and truth.

This is the paradox incomprehensible to the scientific mind.
It is for the mind of faith.

Understanding the reality of the New Being in Jesus as the Christ is liberating for me. It makes possible faith and does away with fear. It enables me to understand the Spiritual Presence as the process of New Being, ever re-uniting me with that ground of being which makes me whole. There is more depth to the stories of the Bible than mere literal interpretation. With the understanding of this depth, faith comes to life.

What is important is the "nowness" of this message of the New Being. The new reality Jesus as the Christ brought begins now in the present. He transformed historical existence and did not try to lead us out of it. He showed us that we don't need to sacrifice our existence, but only to fulfill it by the movement of God in our lives, conquering the separation. As was stated earlier the New Being overcomes the problems inherent in human existence: disruption, conflict, self-destruction, meaninglessness, despair, and self-estrangement. The reality of the New Being is one of reconciliation and reunion, of creativity, actuality, meaning and hope. We participate in the New Being, in Christ.

The New Being can only save if one participates in it. This means consciousness and responsibility and not mere passivity to "God's will". There is a tension or a polarity between determinism and freedom. For me this means that active in human life there is a purpose and on the other hand

human freedom. There is a balance between them that calls for both the recognition of God in our lives and the recognition that we are to be full participants in the movement of our lives. We are called to participate in the New Being.

The Spiritual Presence enables us to participate in the New Being. It acts upon our personal center by taking it into the universal center which is the transcendent unity. The transcendent unity embraces the content of all possible encounters. This is the communion of the Holy Spirit. Our essential being is liberated in this communion. The personal center under the impact of the Spiritual Presence is altered without disruption into essential being. Finite reality is judged according to the essential element. Those which are incompatible are barred from entering. In other words essential being conquers the distortions of existence in the reality of the New Being.

The Spirit relates us to the divine ground of being. This relatedness includes knowledge of the depth of the divine.

We are not commanded to achieve reunion, but we are given it. It is not something we can "achieve" but it is given.

Even though this knowledge is fragmentary and all our potentialities will never be actualized, the presence of the Spirit helps us to accept our human predicament. The word acceptance here is of great importance. It is not

something to pass over lightly. We learn to accept the reality of life and in so doing we are given a new meaning to life with this knowledge of the depth. The acceptance and the meaning of our life is one of understanding it as a mystery. It is as though we only begin to understand the new reality by participating in the New Being. We can never achieve it, we may never be new, we have no guarantee for life is still ambiguous.

We can expect the process after rebirth to be as we stated earlier, one of increased awareness, increased freedom, increased relatedness, and increased transcendence. These correspond to the elements of faith which are openness, acceptance, and expectation of fulfillment.

We act out of our reunion and participation with God and not from any command.

At this point I would like to briefly sum up Tillich's understanding of the second area of questioning on the symbols which express God.

The main symbol we have explored in the above discussion was rebirth: what does it mean? The meaning of this symbol was explored above. Besides rebirth being a symbol, there are other symbols which aid in its expression.

The first symbol we looked at in Tillich's section was baptism and water under "Sacrament". Then we looked at rebirth as an expression of birthing and the feminine experience, and how these symbols gave expression to God and were contained in God.

We receive the Spirit through sacraments, our concern here being the sacrament of baptism. It is in this sacrament that what we call rebirth is symbolized and acted out. Why is it important to act out symbolically rebirth? For Tillich it is important because it enables the Spirit to be received in a more explicit way. It affirms this central part of our religious life.

As was seen in Tillich's discussion on water and baptism, we have several symbols acting and reacting upon each other. The feeling which I receive from these many symbols in action together is the power of the ritual itself. For here in baptism we have the acting out of rebirth, the expression of God through feminine symbols of birthing, the symbolic importance of water as feminine, and water as the form or the place where the death of the old and the delivering of the new life takes place, and lastly it includes the activity and reception of the Spirit in one's life.

But beyond this is the essence. What is of the greatest importance in the discussion of symbols is what it says of God's existence and revelation to us, of how we can relate to God. This is the primary aim of the discussion. The revelation which was intended for us to have and understand through symbols was discussed above in the summation of the first area of questioning. The symbols give expression to the revelation in our language and in our images whether found in dreams or fantasies or in art.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION: UNDERSTANDING REBIRTH AND THE SYMBOLS
WHICH EXPRESS IT

The conclusion of this dissertation is a comparative analysis of the psychological interpretation of rebirth given by Carl Jung and the theological interpretation of rebirth given by Paul Tillich.

The first area of comparison will be to relook at their common understanding of rebirth as a restoration of wholeness. We shall see that for Tillich the starting place for rebirth is Jesus as the Christ who is known as the New Being, the final revelation, and the restorative principle. As we shall see, even though Jung regards rebirth as a restoration of the mortal with the immortal, he does not say that this process begins with Jesus as the Christ. This is the major difference between the two. For both Tillich and Jung, rebirth begins a process towards restoring wholeness of the individual by a coming together of the finite or mortal with the divine or infinite or immortal. A part of this discussion on the meaning of rebirth brings in a discussion of change. Change is basic to rebirth.

The second and final area of comparison will be a discussion of the symbols of rebirth and how these speak about God.

The first area of comparison involves a definition of rebirth. Jung supports the form of rebirth known as

renovatio which means a natural transformation within the span of the individual life. The essential nature of the person is not changed for this part has and will always be, but the way in which one functions is changed because of a knowledge of this essential part. This renovatio includes the natural transformation Jung calls individuation.

The symbolic expression of renovatio can be found in a ritual such as baptism whereby the perpetual continuation of life through transformation and renewal is affirmed.

Through individuation Jung says that we become truly who we are meant to be. By this he means that we were given wholeness in the beginning, but because of existence that wholeness was taken away. He says that the wholeness or the immortal within was always there waiting for release.

This whole process does not only "solve" psychological problems, but for Jung it also means a spiritual well-being.

For Tillich rebirth is reunion with one's self, one's neighbor and God. Rebirth reunites the essence of one's being with God. By experiencing this rebirth we become who we are meant to be. The potentialities of one's life are given a greater actualization when united with God. Rebirth enables one to begin the process of reaching toward God and being united with the divine.

Without the New Being in the Christ, Tillich would say there would be no rebirth. In general humanity expects a new reality. The new reality of which the Christ reveals

is one which embraces the individual, society and nature, transforming historical existence. The New Being fulfills all finite being by conquering its estrangement with God. Alike in this respect, Jung and Tillich affirm the fulfillment of human nature but from different starting places.

When the individual becomes a new person in Christ it is done by a creative act of the Spirit, and does not begin by individual decision alone.

The New Being can be seen as a restorative principle, restoring essential and existential being. This understanding of New Being presupposes that there was a wholeness in the beginning which has been broken. Here again Jung and Tillich agree that there was wholeness which was lost and which needs to be regained.

Both Tillich and Jung when speaking of rebirth speak to the present promise of life. They both speak of something which can happen now in the present in one's life. The New Being and the individuation process are for the present moment and not for some future by and by. The New Being and the individuation process are similar in that they speak to fulfilling human life and not to negating it. We participate in the New Being which was given. The "nowness" of the message is important. Both men agree that once one is reborn, one is not automatically new. Both would see in thenowness of the fulfillment of human potentiality consciousness and responsibility for the process.

Therefore, we can say that rebirth defined means the

beginning of transformation of the individual. But more than this rebirth points to the spirit as the aim of life which is a perpetual continuation of life through transformation and renewal.

Rebirth can be defined as the beginning place of the return to that wholeness which was originally given.

For me rebirth is defined in terms of the New Being revealed in Jesus as the Christ. The New Being revealed a new reality which calls for fulfillment of life as life moves toward Spirit even beyond death of consciousness.

When we define rebirth as the beginning of transformation, we also are saying that change is basic to it. For Tillich rebirth means participation in the divine life, in a new reality. It ultimately means that one is reunited with one's self, God, and the other. To say that we are reunited presupposes a division, a separation of the individual from these three areas.

To become reunited also presupposes that one begins a new process of change and growth. This growth towards a new understanding of life through participation in the New Being is likened to maturity within life. We have called this maturity under the Spiritual Presence increasing awareness, increasing freedom, increasing relatedness, and increasing transcendence, describing them in detail in Chapter III, Section C, 1.

The increasing quality of life under the Spiritual Presence points to the maturity of life which has as its

aim, Spirit. The increasing quality of life is a change in both the direction of the divine, its height, and the direction of the depth of the self working within history. The increasing quality of life means that opposites are overcome, basically the opposites of subject and object.

Tillich says further that revelation and salvation are received through the divine Spirit. When one is grasped by the divine Spirit the center of one's personality is transformed. Human problems are answered when one is under the impact of the Spiritual Presence. The personal center is taken into the divine center making faith and love possible. The Spiritual Presence re-establishes the centered self fragmentarily. The subject-object split is overcome from the vertical direction whereby reunion is given.

The reunion provided by the vertical dimension relates the individual through the divine spirit to the divine ground of being. This reunion with the divine ground includes knowledge of the depth of the divine.

Perfection is unattainable as is actualization of all the creative possibilities of a person. The Spiritual Presence cannot change this situation because what is finite cannot become infinite. What the Spirit can do is create an acceptance of finitude by the individual.

Jung says about the overcoming of opposites that consciousness is made possible by the discrimination of opposites. Opposites were one in the beginning. Existence means to have opposites. But in the end opposites will be

one again. He says that when the One is united with the Other, its antithesis, and the opposites are paired, the experience of individuation and the attainment of the self is experienced. The opposites he sees as being overcome are those of the unconscious and conscious and the immortal and mortal. Individuation integrates these opposites making possible a higher consciousness.

Therefore, we can say that rebirth means the beginning of a process of growth. This growth brings the individual closer to her or his own self, to the divine and to the other. Opposites become bridged. Growth includes change, a change which can be called a maturity. The growth we experience is fragmentary and so even though potentialities become increasingly more actual, they are never complete.

The third and final area of comparison is that of the symbols of rebirth. Both men point out that symbols are not empirical copies of finite reality but point to the spiritual reality only. Whereas Jung speaks of transforming symbols, Tillich speaks of a final revelation which enables the individual to be transformed or to become new. For Jung the transforming symbols are to be understood in much the same way as Tillich understands them.

The point here is that for Tillich the symbols we use speak of the final revelation first before doing anything else. The difference between the two is ultimacy. Tillich speaks in ultimate terms about the final revelation whereas Jung does not.

Tillich says that symbols, rituals and myths express the divine ground of being, our ultimate concern. Only symbolic language can express the ultimate, he pointed out. Moreover, symbols both point beyond themselves to the divine and also participate in the divine. Symbols open up dimensions and elements of reality which otherwise would remain closed and unapproachable. And more than this, symbols are able to unlock areas in our soul which correspond to areas in reality.

Jung says that Christian symbols and images have been used to express the revelation of God and the ever-unique experience of divinity. Unfortunately, however, many images have been objectified and philosophized out of relevancy as symbols. For Jung this destruction of religious symbols is disastrous. Religious symbols attract persons and convince persons of a truth not otherwise perceivable. Religious symbols speak of the divine in ways in which language cannot. Myths are symbolic expressions of the inner unconscious drama of the psyche which becomes accessible to our consciousness by ways of projection. In other words we see in nature that which is happening to our inner being.

The Child for Jung represents the New Being or child of God. Jung says that the childhood state is brought before our eyes in religious circumstances as a reminder of the original human condition. But also the image of the childhood state is brought forward in order to unite the original condition with the present condition.

The child for Jung points up another side of life and expresses a wholeness of life. The child represents the urge of life to attain self-realization. The child also represents a new beginning when it is born. The child has before it the future and with that future a higher stage of self-realization. This symbol of rebirth points to the difficulty of achieving wholeness and new life within the life span.

For Tillich the rebirth ritual and symbol expresses something mysterious. It opens up the way for participation in the newness of the New Being by becoming children or new creations. The new creature steps away from the waters of baptism into a new reality which opens up a new future. The new creature is given a new life which can actualize potential, which can overcome the ambiguities of life, and which can reunite the essence with the existence. All things are possible now for this one.

Jung says of rebirth itself that it is an unobservable process of an inner transformation. The outcome of the inner transformation is a "new person". For Jung the new person is the essential person within the self. He calls the essential being the "inner friend of the soul" and "the immortal one" who accompanies the individual throughout life. We come to know this inner friend, but yet the mortal and the immortal can never be one. Jung says that the conscious part of us, the mortal part, resists the inner friend so that the transformation he speaks about is not a personal one but a spiritual one.

The transformation of the personal does happen, but it is the final outcome of the inner transformation. This is so because the immortal part is the nourishing element of the conscious. Therefore the immortal influences the conscious mind with energy.

Moreover, it is this immortal part which is that which is capable of transformation. This content contains the potential for wholeness which consciousness lacks. Rebirth for Jung takes place here with the inner being.

The immortal content is personified by the transforming symbols. The personification represents, points to, the highest unity of conscious and unconscious. The Christ is seen as a transformer. The symbols used to express the Christ quality of transformation are the symbols of the bread of life and the fish which are both nourishing elements which speak to the immortal content within the mortal.

Rebirth is seen as both a mystery and both a symbol for the yearning persons have for a life beyond consciousness. Jung affirms that we know the presence of God and the continuing aspect of life when we are experiencing transformation.

We are moving toward a wholistic theology that strives to look at the whole person when expressing the Christian faith. And we are trying to de-masculinize the language and symbolic expressions about God.

As was stated earlier, it has been traditional for the male god to encompass the feminine experience, but, of

course, not vice versa. What is needed is to see that God embraces finite experience which is feminine, and that the God which we seek to give expression to by using this symbology is not merely a male God.

The rebirth symbolism reaffirms birth. It brings about a rebirth into a new existence which in Jung's understanding satisfies the yearning for immortality by revealing the perpetual continuation of life.

Rebirth transforms life by increasing it. Life is increased by the coming to knowledge of the immortal or spiritual content within each of us. For Jung the rituals of rebirth free the inner friend of the soul from the depth of one's being. But essential in understanding Jung is that what is reborn is really what has always been. The rebirth is a return to the reality which has been lost.

For Tillich the symbol of rebirth points beyond itself and at the same time participates in the reality it symbolizes. Rebirth also points to an understanding of God in our lives. The understanding of God which rebirth expresses is the symbolic expression of God being revealed in terms of feminine experience. The symbols used in rebirth point toward the finite experience of birthing and the participation of the mother in that experience. The symbols also point beyond the finite experience to express in a symbolic way how God works in our recreation into a new future and a new reality. The finite and the infinite are deeply intertwined in this symbol.

The finite experience of the physical birth of a new human being has become a vehicle for a concrete assertion about God. Just as the mother delivers forth through the pain of labor a new human being, so too God bears us forth into a new reality which was revealed by Jesus as the Christ. What truer and better symbol could be used for the understanding of the new creation through a rebirth?

More importantly, the new creation now enters a new quality of life which reunites the divine life with the human life. The divine becomes more a part of the human life enabling the human to actualize the potential which is Spirit as the aim of life. The symbol of rebirth is of a process of the inner directedness of life moving towards Spirit. Life is fulfilled when life moves toward Spirit.

Rebirth affirms the coming together of the individual and the final revelation in Jesus as the Christ. The symbol of rebirth for Tillich affirms that which Jung stated, that this symbol expresses the mystery of revelation which is also a mystery in its appearance. Jung says that the process of transformation which began with the rebirth cannot be seen, it is an inner event unobservable to the scientific mind.

Alike to Jung, Tillich sees God as being the very basis of our existence, that which provides our essence, and that the rebirth is a reunion with that which was given in the beginning, but which had to be restored through Jesus as the Christ, the New Being.

The transforming experience of rebirth is told and expressed by the feminine experience of birthing and bringing forth new life which is pregnant with the future.

A new understanding of an old image may bring about a better understanding of the revelation which has always been there.

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